

News of Lincoln's death came by telegram

(Edited from the historical writings of the late Jack Rudolph.)

Deborah Martin in her Brown County history says the first inkling that President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated came in a War Department telegram to the 5th District Provost Marshal, Capt. C.R. Merrill, followed by another telegram describing the assassin John Wilkes Booth.

There is no record of Green Bay's early reaction to the shock. *The Advocate*, a weekly newspaper, had been issued the day before the assassination and didn't appear again until April 20, the day after the state funeral in Washington.

As was the custom, the paper appeared with wide, black column rules and the news from Washington was headlined simply "Assassination of President Lincoln" and "The Terrible Crime".

On April 17, a public meeting was held in Green Bay. A set of resolutions were adopted expressing the city's grief and renewed the "pledge of fealty" to the government. At 1 p.m., April 19th, a "vast concourse" of Green Bay and Fort Howard citizenry resplendent in tall hats and mourning emblems assembled in front of the Beaumont House, Main and Washington Street. A funeral procession was formed under the marshalship of Colonel Bugh.

Pall bearers, wearing long frock coats and stove pipe hats, swathed in crepe that hung down their back, marched on either side of the horse drawn hearse containing an empty casket lavishly

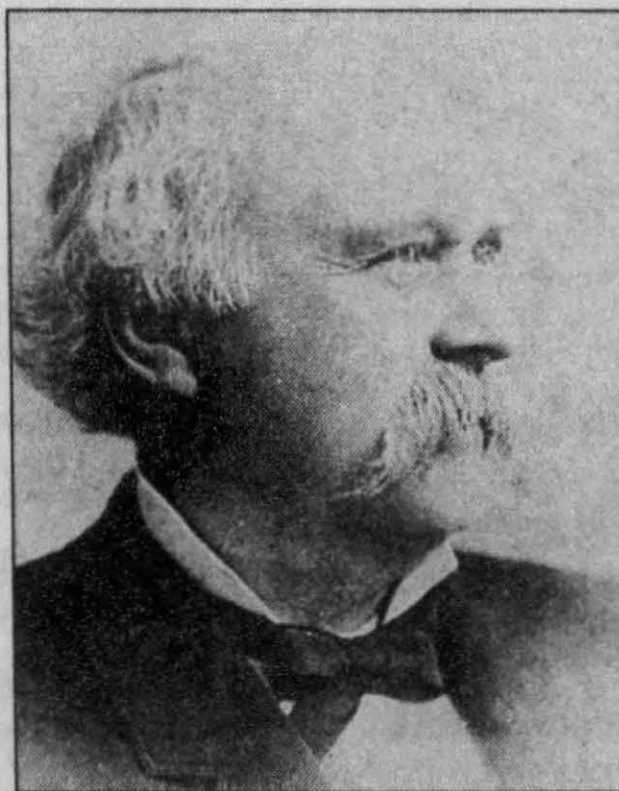


Photo courtesy of Green Bay De Pere Antiquarian Society

Spoke at Lincoln service: Charles D. Robinson, editor and publisher of the *Green Bay Advocate*, delivered the principal eulogy at a memorial service in Green Bay for President Abraham Lincoln.

draped in black. The pall bearers were Sen. T. O. Howe, Capt. C.R. Merrill, Joseph Tayllor, Fred S. Ellis, J.P. Dousman, Dr. H.O. Crane, Alexander Guesnier, D.M. Whitney, W.J. Abrams and C.D. Robinson. They were followed by the band, committee of arrangements, the National Flag, the Mayor and City Council, Masonic Lodge, The Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Good

Templars, fire departments of Green Bay and Fort Howard, the Turners, German Benevolent Society, citizens on foot and in carriages.

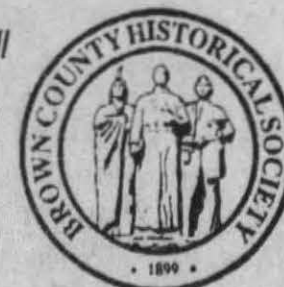
Led by the mounted marshals, Veteran Soldiers and Clergy, the procession route of the march went south on Washington Street to Chicago, east to Adams, north to Main, thence to Monroe, back to the Washington-Main Street Corner via Cherry, Adams and Main Streets. Virtually every business and residence displayed a black crepe on the front door. Flags "shrouded in morning" were at half mast, bells tolled and the band's dirge was punctuated by the dull thud of a saluting cannon fired at half-hour intervals throughout the day. The largest crowd ever gathered in the city lined the route. Citizens generally were requested to wear a badge of mourning "on the left lapel of coat, a rosette of black crepe, with red, white and blue ribbon for the space of thirty days."

Memorial services were held on the site of the Harvey & Co. dock at the Fox River end of Main Street where piles of shingles served as seats for the ladies. A clergyman opened with a prayer after which Charles D. Robinson, co-founder of the *Green Bay Advocate*, editor and publisher, delivered the principal eulogy followed by two ministers with concluding remarks by Mayor Myron P. Lindsley.

A motion was adopted to have Robinson's speech printed and five copies sent to the Illinois State Historical Society. The *Advocate* also promised to pub-



Throughout this year of Wisconsin's Sesquicentennial celebration, the Press-Gazette will publish a series of stories on local history. This feature, prepared with the assistance of the Brown County Historical Society, will appear on Mondays.



lish it in full in their next issue. Unfortunately, it didn't, so the only record is now probably filed away in some forgotten archive at Springfield Illinois, unless Robinson's eloquent editorial in the April 20, 1865 issue is in fact, the speech itself.

Submitted by Carol Jones, Brown County Historical Society